Mobility Scooter and Electric Wheelchair Policy

March 2019
March 2022
This policy applies to

- Horizon

Policy Summary

This policy provides information and guidance for the safe use and storage of mobility scooters and electric wheelchairs within Link Group’s housing with communal areas.

The aim of the policy is to reduce the hazards to safety of tenants and visitors to Link Group Properties whilst ensuring we are committed to promoting independent living.

The policy will be applied retrospectively to take account of the Fire (Scotland) Act 2005 and the co-operation of existing tenants will be sought in implementing the requirements of the policy.

Equalities

This policy fully complies with Link’s Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Policy. An Equality Impact Screening Assessment has been completed to accompany this policy.

Privacy

This policy fully complies with Link’s Data Protection Policy, data protection legislation and good practice. A Privacy Impact Screening Assessment has been completed to accompany this policy.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Policy Owner</th>
<th>Review Manager</th>
<th>Approved By</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Horizon Managing Director</td>
<td>Operations Director</td>
<td>Horizon Management Team</td>
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Revision History

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Version Number</th>
<th>Comments</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>March 2019</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>Original Link Housing Policy 2016-2019</td>
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1. INTRODUCTION

The use of mobility scooters and electric wheelchairs in the community for people to maintain their independence and freedom to move around is becoming a more common occurrence. This is increasing the number of powered mobility scooters and wheelchairs within the properties owned or managed by the Link Group of companies and its subsidiaries (Link).

Link’s developments have not been built to take into account the use, charging and storage of powered mobility scooters and wheelchairs. The communal areas in these developments do not easily allow alterations to meet the increased requirement for these facilities however it is recognised that in order to promote independent living there is a need to work with tenants to identify suitable storage and charging facilities.

This Mobility Scooter Policy has been developed to contribute to this by providing a clear framework to support accessibility for older and disabled people and to set out the objectives and principles for the safe use and storage of mobility scooters and electric wheelchairs in common areas within our developments.

The primary aim of Link in its approach to the use of powered mobility scooters and wheelchairs within the developments is to provide a safe environment for all tenants, staff and visitors with all hazards identified and removed or suitable controls in place.

Horizon’s vision is for inclusive communities where everyone has a home that meets their needs and that disabled and older people can live independently in their own home, adapted and supported as they need.

2. PRINCIPLES

The following principles govern the operation of this policy:

- Be aware of and take account of tenants’ needs, views and priorities when carrying out Risk Assessments in relation to the use and storage of mobility scooters and powered wheelchairs.
- Clearly define levels and standards to staff and customers
- Be fair, equitable and non-discriminatory
- Be aware of and responsive to changing standards, statutory and regulatory requirements and recognised good practice, in particular the Fire (Scotland) Act 2005.
- Promote accessibility and inclusion by taking account of adaptability when delivering our services.

3. OBJECTIVES

The objectives of this policy are to provide:
- Clearly define the responsibilities of tenants and Link in relation to the safe use and storage of mobility scooters and powered wheelchairs
- Clear guidance to staff and tenants on the use of powered mobility scooters and wheelchairs.
- Provide information to staff and tenants about the classification of mobility scooters.
- An overview of the approach to providing storage facilities and of funding options available to support the provision

4. APPROACH AND METHOD

The Senior Management Team in its formal approval of the policy acknowledges that it accepts full responsibility for its implementation. Day-to-day responsibility for the operation of this policy lies with the appropriate directors and managers of the Link group of companies. All relevant employees have a responsibility to ensure that this policy is applied as instructed.

The policy will be implemented using the following approaches:

4.1 Classification of wheelchairs and mobility scooters

Wheelchairs and mobility scooters are defined by the Driver and Vehicle Licensing Agency [DVLA] as follows:

**Class 1** Manual wheelchairs that are self propelled or attendant propelled. These do not need to be registered with the DVLA.

**Class 2** Powered wheelchairs and scooters. These are intended for footpath use only with a maximum speed of 4mph and an unladen weight not exceeding 113.4kg. These do not need to be registered with the DVLA.

**Class 3** Mechanically propelled invalid carriages that are constructed or adapted to be capable of exceeding a speed of 4mph but incapable of exceeding a speed of 8mph. They must be fitted with a device capable of limiting the maximum speed to 4mph for use when travelling on footways. The unladen weight must not exceed 150kg. These must be registered with the DVLA for road use and be licensed in the ‘disable taxation’ class.

This policy will apply to:

- Class 1 wheelchairs not stored within a tenant’s property;
- Class 2 powered wheelchairs or mobility scooters;
- Class 3 mechanically propelled invalid carriages.

4.2 Risk

The use of powered mobility scooters and wheelchairs presents many risks, not only to the building, but to other tenants, staff and visitors. These include:

- Collisions with vehicles, buildings and people causing injury and damage;
- Trip hazards from inappropriate storage and charging;
- Fire risk caused by faulty mechanisms;
- Obstruction or restriction of safe fire escape routes or fire exits.

Research and trials highlighted the dangers posed by heat release and smoke production from burning mobility scooters. This research identified that a fire involving mobility scooters in the confines of a corridor or stairway would create a substantial risk to occupants and make such routes impassable and put at risk any occupants who open their door.

Link have a legal responsibility to promote the wellbeing and safety of tenants by adhering to relevant legislation. This responsibility requires due consideration of any information or guidance which highlights potential risks and dangers to the occupants of our properties when developing our policies and procedures.

4.3 Storage of powered mobility scooters and wheelchairs within developments

Following the introduction of the Fire (Scotland) Act 2005, Link is required to carry out a fire risk assessment in each of our developments.

The obstruction from storing mobility scooters and electric wheelchairs and potential fire risk from battery charging in fire escape corridors and stairway routes will mean no further permission will be given for storing and charging in these areas.

This change will present some difficulty where such circumstances already exist. Link will seek, in consultation with the affected tenants, to agree suitable alternative arrangements and adopt this new policy position within an appropriate period of time and as part of the Risk Assessment outlined in Appendix 1.

No provision has previously been made in our developments for the storage and charging of mobility scooters and electric wheelchairs. This lack of provision presents difficulties in identifying suitable storage areas and this provision will vary per development. Some developments may offer no internal storage facilities. Link will work with tenants to identify suitable external storage areas and may consider the provision of special storage facilities where there is suitable and sufficient space available within the development grounds and after obtaining planning permission, where required. Funding options to cover the costs of such provision will be explored with the tenant including Stage 3 Adaptation grant funding.

4.4 Requirement for permission for use and storage of mobility scooters and electric wheelchairs.

Class 1 Where the tenant is able to store the wheelchair in their flat there is no requirement for Link’s permission to be sought. If the tenant is unable to store the wheelchair within their flat, permission to store the wheelchair in a suitable location within the development must be obtained from Link.

Class 2 Where a Powered Wheelchair or Mobility Scooter meets the class 2 classification and it will be stored and charged within the tenants home. It is essential to seek advice from Link to ensure that such storage will not
prejudice the safety of those who occupy or visit the property therefore permission must be obtained.

Permission to use a Class 2 Powered Wheelchair or Mobility Scooter about the development must be obtained prior to use within the development.

Where a Class 2 Powered Wheelchair or Mobility Scooter is to be stored within the external communal areas of the development then the tenant must request permission from Link to do so before bringing it to the development.

Class 2 powered wheelchairs or mobility scooters must not be stored in internal communal areas in the development.

Class 3 This classification of Mobility Scooter is heavier and faster than those on Class 2 and is designed for and permitted to use the public highways. As a consequence Link will not permit their use, storage or recharging within a tenants flat or in any internal areas of the development.

Requests for permission to use and store a Class 3 Mechanically Propelled Invalid carriage will only be accepted on the basis of external storage being available. Use within the internal common areas of the development will not be permitted.

4.5 Requesting Permission

Requests for permission must be made in writing. Permission will be given in writing and will be subject to:

- Proof of adequate insurance being provided.
- Acceptance of the Guidance Notes for Use with the scooter or wheelchair.
- Where, appropriate, the tenant agreeing to pay the cost of the electricity supply.
- Risk Assessment (Appendix 1) has been completed and all criteria has been satisfied.

Permission will be reviewed on an annual basis and may be removed at Link’s discretion if:

- The scooter has been unused for a period of six months and is using a storage space that could be utilised by another tenant.
- No insurance is in place for the scooter.
- There are arrears on any rent account charges for the use of internal or external storage facilities where required and a payment agreement has not been made.
- Contributions towards the use of the communal electricity supply where required for the purposes of storage are in arrears and a repayment plan is not in place.
- The wheelchair or mobility scooter is being stored and charged in an internal or external area that is contrary to the permission given.
4.6 Internal Storage Area

Link must ensure that escape routes and stairways are clear and free from obstructions. As such permission to store mobility scooters and electric wheelchairs in these areas will no longer be given. Only in exceptional circumstances and were suitable internal storage areas have been identified through the Risk Assessment (Appendix 1) will Link consider granting permission. Internal areas being considered for use as a scooter storage facility must meet all of the following criteria:

- Be lockable to minimise the risk of theft or misuse by unauthorised persons.
- Provide adequate fire separation from escape routes.
- Much have adequate automatic fire detection systems.
- Must contain, or be able to be provided with, suitable electrical supply for the purposes of battery charging.
- Must have adequate natural ventilation.

Permission to have a mobility scooter will not be given until suitable storage has been identified.

Where a tenant makes use of Link’s electricity supply for the purposes of battery charging then a fixed annual contribution towards the cost of electricity will be required.

4.7 External Storage and Charging Facilities

When no suitable internal location can be found to store and charge mobility scooters or wheelchairs, Link, in consultation with tenants, will give consideration to the provision of an external storage facility. The provision of an external storage facility will require that:

- Suitable space is available.
- There is no loss of privacy or potential disturbance to neighbouring homes.
- Planning or other statutory permission is obtained, where required.

A rent will be charged to contribute to the cost of providing and maintaining the storage facility, as well as to the cost of electricity used for battery charging.

Depending on the development there may be varying physical limitations on the number of internal or external storage facilities that can reasonably be provided. Provision of storage and charging facilities will take into account the current needs of tenants and the demands for the facility.

Allocation of internal or external storage space will be based on individual circumstances. Where demand for external storage exceeds supply or where no further external storage facility can be provided then Link will operate a waiting list.

4.8 Tenant Consultation
The provision of an internal or external storage facility will, if necessary, make use of the communal area of the development. It is therefore necessary to consult the tenants who will be affected and seek their views on the use of communal areas for such purposes. Link must balance the views of the tenants with obligations under The Equality Act 2010 to make reasonable adjustments for disabled people.

4.9 Insurance

Tenants must ensure that they have adequate insurance for all class 2 and class 3 mobility scooters and wheelchairs irrespective of their storage location and must provide proof of cover before permission is given. Proof of insurance must be presented annually.

Link will not accept any responsibility for scooters stored in a development or on development grounds.

4.10 Recovering Costs

Link will seek to recover all costs that arise from the use of any class of wheelchair or mobility scooter with their developments. Costs will include:

- The costs of any internal adaptations to developments to accommodate the storage of mobility scooter, unless funding through Stage 3 Adaptation grant.
- The costs of erecting an external storage facility and ongoing maintenance, unless funding through Stage 3 Adaptation grant.
- The provision of electricity for battery charging.

5. MONITORING OF THE POLICY

The following areas will be subject to monitoring:

- Risk management
- Provision of training and/or information to staff
- Compliance with policy requirements and procedures

These will be monitored by appropriate managers within each company and/or function, and reported to the relevant director. If any significant issues of concern arise, these will be dealt with by the director who will report such matters to the Board.

Any matter which demonstrates a serious failure of internal controls should be reported immediately to the Managing Director.

6. COMPLAINTS AND APPEALS

Link Group welcomes complaints and positive feedback, both of which provide information which helps us to improve our services. We use a complaints handling
procedure (CHP) developed by the Scottish Public Services Ombudsman (SPSO) and the Scottish Housing Regulator.

The CHP allows for most complaints to be resolved by front line staff within a five-day limit (first stage), or if the complaint is complex, a detailed investigation will be made by a manager within a 20 day limit (second stage). At the end of the second stage our response will be made by a director. If the customer remains dissatisfied, he/she may then refer the matter to the SPSO.

The SPSO does not normally review complaints about our factoring service. If a factoring customer is dissatisfied after using the CHP, the complaint may be referred to the First-tier Tribunal (Housing and Property Chamber).

Anyone receiving care or support service from us has the right to complain either direct to the Care Inspectorate or to us.

At each stage Link Group will advise the customer how the complaint should be taken forward and advise which agency would be most appropriate to consider the case.

7. POLICY AVAILABILITY

A summary of this policy can be made available in a number of other languages and other formats on request.

8. POLICY REVIEW

Link Group undertake to review this policy regularly, at least every three years, with regard to:

- Applicable legislation, rules, regulations and guidance
- Changes in the organisation
- Continued best practice
Privacy Impact Assessment Screening Questions

Carrying out a Privacy Impact Assessment [PIA] will be useful to any project – large or small – that:

- Involves personal or sensitive data about individuals
- May affect our customers’ reasonable expectations relating to privacy
- Involves information that may be used to identify or target individuals

Please tick the applicable statement(s) below. Will your project involve:

1. A substantial change to an existing policy, process or system that involves personal information
   - Yes
   - No

2. A new collection of personal information
   - Yes
   - No

3. A new way of collecting personal information (for example collecting it online)
   - Yes
   - No

4. A change in the way personal information is stored or secured
   - Yes
   - No

5. A change to how sensitive information is managed
   - Yes
   - No

6. Transferring personal information outside the EEA or using a third-party contractor
   - Yes
   - No

7. A decision to keep personal information for longer than you have previously
   - Yes
   - No

8. A new use or disclosure of personal information you already hold
   - Yes
   - No

9. A change of policy that results in people having less access to information you hold about them
   - Yes
   - No

10. Surveillance, tracking or monitoring of movements, behaviour or communications
    - Yes
    - No

11. Changes to your premises involving private spaces where clients or customers may disclose their personal information (reception areas, for example)
    - Yes
    - No

If you have answered ‘Yes’ to any of these points, please complete a full Privacy Impact Assessment. If you have answered ‘No’, you need take no further action in completing a Privacy Impact Assessment.
### Equality Impact Assessment Screening Questions

Will the implementation of this policy have an impact on any of the following protected characteristics?

<p>| | |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Age</td>
<td>✔ Yes □ No</td>
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<tr>
<td>2. Disability</td>
<td>✔ Yes □ No</td>
</tr>
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<td>3. Gender reassignment</td>
<td>□ Yes ✔ No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Marriage and Civil Partnership</td>
<td>□ Yes ✔ No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Pregnancy and Maternity</td>
<td>□ Yes ✔ No</td>
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<tr>
<td>6. Race</td>
<td>□ Yes ✔ No</td>
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<td>7. Religion or belief</td>
<td>□ Yes ✔ No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8. Sex</td>
<td>□ Yes ✔ No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9. Sexual orientation</td>
<td>□ Yes ✔ No</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*If you have answered ‘Yes’ to any of these points, please complete a full Equality Impact Assessment. If you have answered ‘No’, you need take no further action in completing an Equality Impact Assessment.*
APPENDIX 1

RISK ASSESSMENT – STORAGE OF MOBILITY SCOOTER AND WHEELCHAIRS IN LINK GROUP PROPERTIES
Risk Assessment Form
Storage of Mobility Scooters in Link Group Properties

Assessment is to be completed by Link representative and approved by the relevant line manager before mobility scooter is used or charged in Link Group and subsidiaries properties.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Tenant’s Details</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Tenants Name:</td>
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<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Tenancy Address:</td>
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<tr>
<th>Contact information (Optional)</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Home Tel No:</td>
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<tr>
<td>Mobile Tel No:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Email Address:</td>
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</tbody>
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**PART A**

**Application Details**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date of Application:</th>
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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>1</th>
<th>Will mobility scooter be stored and charged within tenants home (this is the preferred option)?</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>If the answer is ‘Yes’ go to Question 2</td>
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<thead>
<tr>
<th>2</th>
<th>Is the layout of the property and home access suitable for the mobility scooter?</th>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>If ‘Yes’ go to Question 3</td>
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<tr>
<th>3</th>
<th>Will the storage and charging of the mobility scooter within tenants home restrict or hinder the tenants or visitors escape from property or prevent emergency services providing assistance in an emergency situation?</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>If the answer is ‘No’ permission will be granted to store the mobility scooter within the home. Go to PART D and enter summary of the outcome of the risk assessment. If the answer is ‘Yes’ storage and charging of the mobility scooter will not be permitted in the home. Go to PART B Question 4</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
## PART B

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th>Yes</th>
<th>No</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Are there any locations within the property with suitable access, storage and charging facilities for the mobility scooter?</td>
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<td></td>
<td>If ‘Yes’ please complete Question 5. If ‘No’ go to PART C Question 6</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5.a</td>
<td>Please enter below the location of area(s) being assessed and complete Questions 5.b to 5.e for the area(s) for storage and charging of mobility scooter</td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
<td>Locations….(e.g. storage at window recess directly outside flat)</td>
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<tr>
<td>5.b</td>
<td>During storage and charging will there be safe access and exit for the location for tenant and others?</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>5.c</td>
<td>Can the location be secured to prevent tampering, unauthorized use or theft of the mobility scooter?</td>
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<tr>
<td>5.d</td>
<td>Can the location be used for storage and charging without presenting a risk to other users of the property (consideration should be given in respect to fire hazard and safe means of escape)?</td>
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<td></td>
<td>If a fire hazard or means of escape issue is raised the local fire and rescue safety officer and/or the Health and Safety Officer are to be consulted and their commentary attached to assessment.</td>
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<td>5.e</td>
<td>Can charging facilities be provided from the landlord’s electrical supply at the selected locations with costs recovery available?</td>
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<td></td>
<td>If any of the criteria in Question 5b to 5e cannot be met, then permission to store and charge the mobility scooter will not be given for the stated locations. Go to Part C Question 6</td>
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<td></td>
<td>If all the criteria in Question 5b to 5e can be satisfied, then permission to store and charge the mobility scooter will be given for the locations stated. Go to PART D and enter summary of the outcome of the risk assessment.</td>
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## PART C

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<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
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<th>Yes</th>
<th>No</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>Are there any locations / areas external to the property which may be suitable for the storage and charging of mobility scooters?</td>
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<td></td>
<td>If ‘Yes’ please complete Question 7a to 7d. If ‘No’ permission will not be granted. Go to PART D and enter summary of outcome of risk assessment.</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>7.a.</strong></td>
<td>Please enter below the location of area(s) being assessed and complete Questions 7.b to 7d for the area(s) for storage and charging of mobility scooter</td>
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<td>Locations………………………………………………………………………………………</td>
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<td><strong>7.b.</strong></td>
<td>During storage and charging will there be safe access and exit for the location for tenant and others?</td>
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<td><strong>7.c.</strong></td>
<td>Can the location be secured to prevent tampering, unauthorized use or theft of the mobility scooter?</td>
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<td><strong>7.d.</strong></td>
<td>Can the location be used for storage and charging without presenting a risk to other users of the property (consideration should be given in respect to fire hazard and safe means of escape)?</td>
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<td>If a fire hazard or means of escape issue is raised the local fire and rescue safety officer and/or the Health and Safety Officer are to be consulted and their commentary attached to assessment.</td>
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<td>If any of the criteria in Question 7b to 7d cannot be met, then permission to store and charge the mobility scooter will not be given for the stated locations. Go too Part D and enter the summary of the risk assessment.</td>
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<tr>
<td>If all the criteria in Question 7b to 7d can be satisfied, then permission to store and charge the mobility scooter will be given for the locations stated.</td>
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<td><strong>8</strong></td>
<td>Can the charging facility be provided from the tenant’s electrical supply or a suitable supply available which electrical usage for charging mobility scooter can be recovered by landlord.</td>
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<tr>
<td>The preferred option for the electrical charging supply is from the tenant’s own supply but if this is not feasible alternative arrangements should be identified and recommended in assessment.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Go to PART D and enter summary of the outcome of the risk assessment</td>
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## PART D

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date request received</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Date risk assessment completed</td>
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<tr>
<td>Date of response to tenant</td>
<td>(Response to tenants will normally be within 20 working days)</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Outcome of assessment</strong></td>
<td>Permission granted</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Summary Comments:</strong></td>
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</table>

Risk Assessors Name    Signature    Date

Managers Name    Signature    Date

Where permission has been given, a copy of the tenant’s insurance certificate should be obtained and kept with completed form in the tenants file. If the tenant does not hold suitable insurance permission should not be granted.

I understand that permission has be given / refused for the storage and charging of the mobility scooter in the locations stated.

Tenants Name    Signature    Date